

Message Text

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43

ACTION SS-25

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 SSO-00 /026 W
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R 021245Z APR 75

FM AMEMBASSY SAIGON

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 4624

INFO AMEMBASSY BUDAPEST

AMEMBASSY JAKARTA

AMEMBASSY TEHRAN

AMEMBASSY WARSAW

USDEL JEC PARIS

C O N F I D E N T I A L SAIGON 4090

EXDIS

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: CASC, ICRC, PINS, HU, ID, IR, PL, VS

SUBJECT: AMERICANS MISSING IN BAN ME THUOT

REF: SAIGON 3632

1. AMB. SAMIL INDODEL INFORMED EMBOFFS THAT IN HIS CAPACITY AS CHAIRMAN OF THE ICCS HE PAID CALL APRIL 1 ON "PRG" GEN. TUAN. SAMIL HAD COMMISSION AUTHORITY TO MAKE UNOFFICIAL APPROACH TO "PRG" IN ORDER DELIVER DIPLOMATIC NOTES RECEIVED FROM COUNTRIES OF FOREIGN NATIONALS (INCLUDING US) TRAPPED IN BAN ME THUOT DURING RECENT ATTACK AND TO OBTAIN INFORMATION AS TO THEIR PRESENT WELFARE AND FUTURE DISPOSITION.

2. ALTHOUGH GEN. TUAN WAS RELAXED AND FRIENDLY, HE REFUSED TO ACCEPT NOTES AND REPEATED POSITION STAKED OUT IN EARLIER DISCUSSIONS WITH POLDEL (REFTEL) THAT HE HAD NO INFORMATION COVERING STATUS OF ANY FOREIGN NATIONALS IN BAN ME THUOT BUT THAT IF ANY WERE THERE WHEN "PRG" ASSUMED CONTROL THEY WOULD BE TREATED WELL. IN ADDITION, TUAN NOW MAINTAINS THAT ANY PERSON WHO "PRG" DETERMINES ACTIVELY SUPPORTED GVN WILL BE CATEGORIZED "POW", IMPLYING NOT JUST THOSE BELIEVED TO BE "MILITARY ADVISERS". SAMIL RETORTED THAT APPLYING SUCH A LOOSELY DEFINED CRITERION, ALMOST
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ANYBODY IS SUBJECT TO BEING CLASSIFIED POW INCLUDING EVEN PRIESTS

AND SOCIAL WORKERS.

3. COMMENT: THIS IS DEFINITE HARDENING OF "PRG" POSITION RE CLASSIFICATION OF CAPTURED FOREIGNERS. PREVIOUSLY GEN. TUAN MADE POINT TO POLDEL AMB. FIJALKOWSKI THAT "PRG" WOULD ALLOW CIVILIANS, BUT NOT "MILITARY ADVISERS" TO LEAVE FOR SAIGON.

4. AMB. SAMIL WAS AUTHORIZED BY COMMISSION TO MAKE FIRST OFFICIAL ICCS REQUEST FOR INFORMATION ON STATUS OF IRANIAN AND INDONESIAN OFFICERS RESIDENT IN BAN ME THUOT AT TIME OF CAPTURE. TO HIS LOW KEY ORAL REQUEST, TUAN WAS EQUALLY UNRESPONSIVE. MARTIN

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NNN

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